

**Peterborough Conservation Commission minutes
February 17, 2022, 4 p.m., Town House**

Present: Jo Anne Carr, Swift Corwin, John Kerrick, Matt Lundsted, John Patterson, Francie Von Mertens, Robert Wood; Tyler Ward, Select Board liaison; Seth MacLean, DPW Head; Danica Melone, Town Planner; Peter Pitsas, Cold Spring Wells lead Project Engineer

Jaffrey-Peterborough Cold Spring Wells project

Lead project engineer Peter Pitsas presented the plans with a focus on wetland impacts, temporary, permanent, and avoided. Access to the wells is by Class VI Chamberlain Road in Jaffrey with a well-control building permanent wetland impact of 510 sq. ft. and a Chamberlain Road wetland crossing impact of 1,300 sq. ft., the project's only two permanent impacts, both in Jaffrey.

Mr. Pitsas said "directional drilling" would avoid impacts to other wetlands along the waterline route, including the Contoocook River on the way to a hook-up for the Peterborough line with Eversource on the west side of Route 202 in Peterborough near the new storage sheds.

He explained that directional drilling is "trenchless technology" that reams a tunnel under wetlands and river (10" below water depth) and Route 202 with a water pipe attached to the reamer.

Temporary wetland impacts involve timber mats laid across wetlands along "an old woods road," to be removed after temporary access has been achieved.

Jo Anne Carr, familiar with the project from Jaffrey's viewpoint, said the Cold Spring project was important as both towns researched water supply options with future needs in mind and found Cold Spring the only one. It also draws from an aquifer separate from Peterborough's south well.

Jo Anne Carr asked about conservation easements on the considerable acreage in Sharon purchased for the project. Rodney Bartlett has had conversations with The Nature Conservancy, given TNC's Wales Preserve along the Gridley River upstream from the project.

Seth MacLean said there is ongoing conversation with the Monadnock Conservancy. He said the land is owned jointly by Peterborough and Jaffrey.

Members agreed the project design minimized wetland impacts impressively.

After Mr. Pitsas left, members also agreed on a field trip to assess public access and future land uses of the Cold Spring property, some 300 acres.

Swift Corwin will look into access, best routes and timing for ConCom outing.

Town water rates

Robert Wood proposed restructuring water rates in town some years back, and towards that end he recommended budgeting for a water rate study as part of the Cold Spring project. Seth MacLean said the town has a grant request in to NHDES that would include a water rate study as well as a long-range look at "asset management" relating to water use and rates given the new wells coming online.

Road and sidewalk salt

All agreed it's a challenge to balance townspeople's expectations, safety, liability and costs, and environment.

About costs, Robert Wood said in the short-term Calcium chloride costs considerably more, but in terms of impacts on roads, and sidewalks, and bridge deterioration, it's cheaper. He said it might be a combination with rock salt (Sodium chloride) like Keene does. Seth MacLean said he's begun communication with Keene and is looking into other options towns have employed. He also cited the town's existing No Salt and Low Salt zones in town wellhead areas.

Robert Wood said there's a directed correlation between measured conductivity and road salt. The Contoocook is likely in the 70-200 range—not extreme in terms of threats to aquatic life but persistent and trending the wrong way.

Woody, Matt, Francie and Seth will research options.

Minutes

ConCom January minutes were approved.

Matt Lundsted requested that the Local Rivers Advisory Committee minutes be posted on the town website, and Danica agreed to find a place for them.

Gun Club update

As the ZBA upheld Code Officer Tim Herlihy's Administrative Decision that the shooting range location is not grandfathered, only the use (shooting) is. Therefore the Gun Club must seek a Variance from the ZBA for relief from the time limit (three years) after which grandfathered status expires. If granted, the Club then applies for a ZBA Special Exception to expand or replace a grandfathered use.

And then it returns to the Planning Board for Site Plan Review.

Town Planner Danica Melone said her office has been clear to Gun Club representatives that any shooting range permit would very likely be conditioned on clean up and remediation for environmental issues identified by the town and NHDES.

ConCom remains on call for comment from the Zoning Board relating to wetlands at the site of the proposed new range.

Eco Village update

Eco Village will seek a Variance from the ZBA at its April 4 meeting to allow three cottages and assorted structures in the Wetlands Protection Overlay Zone. As the three cottages are proposed to be a new use (primary single-family houses, not accessory housing for the Well School), relief from current code is needed through a variance.

Cunningham Pond

Brief discussion of whether there was a need for water quality monitoring similar to a group monitoring Norway Pond in Hancock didn't arrive at a level of concern that required action.

/fvm